

**Amendments to the Claims**

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A split scanning optical apparatus that includes a plurality of split scanning units for performing scanning within split areas split in a main scanning area and performs exposure for one-time main scanning by performing scanning at the same time by the plurality of split scanning units, the split scanning optical apparatus comprising:

an image information split part that is provided with overlap areas in scanning areas of the split scanning units, an identical portion on a surface to be scanned being exposable mutually in the overlap areas, and splits image information to be provided by exposure to a surface to be scanned into split image information to be provided respectively by the split scanning units;

a plurality of storage parts that respectively store the split image information;

a plurality of address specification parts that respectively specify storage addresses to the storage parts; and

a store operation control part that controls a store operation of the storage parts so that a split position of the image information falls in an overlapping range of the plurality of storage parts specified by the address specification parts[.],

wherein the store operation control part is a store operation switching part that, when two of said address specification parts are busy, cancels a store operation on split image information A to a storage part thereof and switches to a store operation on split image information B to a storage part thereof,

wherein the two pieces A and B of split image information each contain identical image information in the overlap area and one of the address specification parts

controls a store operation on the split image information A to the storage part thereof and the other controls a store operation on the split image information B to the storage part thereof.

2. (Original) The split scanning optical apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the store operation control part is an image information disabling part that outputs a dummy signal as a light source off signal to addresses within the range of the overlap area specified by the address specification parts in storage parts other than storage parts that store image information.

3. (Original) The split scanning optical apparatus according to claim 2, wherein if image information corresponding to the dummy signal is detected before the information split takes place, an image split store operation by the image information disabling part is performed upon detecting of the image information corresponding to the dummy signal.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The split scanning optical apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a timing change part that changes split timing by the store operation control unit for every main scanning operation or for every certain plural number of main scanning operations.